

W5YI

America's Oldest Ham Radio Newsletter REPORT

Up to the minute news from the world of amateur radio, personal computing and emerging electronics. While no guarantee is made, information is from sources we believe to be reliable.

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FCC to Bring Wireless Broadband to 2500-2690 MHz Bands

Begins examination of the rules governing the educational airwaves.

On March 13th, the FCC voted unanimously to review rules governing a large band of spectrum set aside in 1963 for educational and cultural purposes.

At issue is the management of 190 Megahertz of spectrum between 2500-2690 MHz ...about 10 MHz more than is currently allotted for cellphones.

Most of the spectrum is held by schools and churches. While the educational community is allowed to lease unused capacity to the private sector, the current rules do not easily accommodate cellphones and wireless data usage.

Besides being abundant, the educational spectrum is very high quality ...flexible enough to handle everything from TV signals to planned networks for a variety of handheld wireless devices and laptop computers. The spectrum could also provide the final telecom link to rural homes and businesses without the expense of running wires, transmitting the Internet at speeds ten times faster than a high-speed cable modem. Other uses include doctors being able to examine

patients from miles away and students could take courses from home..

The 2500-2690 MHz band is currently allocated to the Instructional Television Fixed Service (ITFS), Multipoint Distribution Service (MDS) and the Multichannel Multipoint Distribution Service (MMDS).

Instructional TV is defined as "a non-broadcast service intended to be used primarily for the transmission of instructional and cultural material to specified receive sites for the formal education of students enrolled in accredited schools." The power authorized (up to 100 watts) allows transmit/receive separations of up to 30-40 miles. MDS/MMDS is also used for wireless cable television which has not proved to be a popular way of distribut-

"The Commission is exploring ways for the American people to enjoy the full potential of a large parcel of previously underutilized, prime spectrum real estate. The opportunity is monumental -- the MMDS/ITFS band encompasses 190 MHz of contiguous spectrum. This is more than double the 83 MHz that spurred the development of Wi-Fi at 2.4 GHz. It is roughly equal to all spectrum currently devoted to terrestrial, mobile wireless."

"The time has come to chip off the regulatory barnacles encumbering ITFS and MMDS," said Powell. "By this Notice, we explore opportunities to increase licensed use of the 2.5 GHz band via spectrum auctions, examine unlicensed spectrum options, and evaluate rule changes to effectuate our earlier decision to add a mobile allocation to the band."

[Statement by FCC Chairman, Michael Powell.]

ing video programming.

The Commission said that "...potential uses for the spectrum allocated to these services have evolved significantly since they were established in 1963."

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The FCC issued the Notice of Proposed Rule making in response to a proposal last year from a coalition of current 2.5 GHz users who want the agency to streamline regulations it says are confusing and allow the airwaves to be used for more services, including wireless Internet access.

The Commission is now inviting comment on how best to reconfigure the 2500-2690 MHz band. Being considered is both a geographic licensing and an unlicensed approach to available ITFS spectrum.

The agency is also considering allowing schools to resell their prime underused spectrum granted four decades ago for educational broadcasting which would help both cash-strapped local school systems and telecom companies which need spectrum to roll out new services.

Among the questions the FCC wants answered is whether to eliminate the requirement that ITFS licensees use the spectrum for educational purposes and whether the spectrum can be sold to the highest bidder who would be allowed to use it to launch new commercial services.

"As a result of these proposed rule changes, the Commission anticipates that licensees will be afforded an opportunity to provide alternatives for the provision of broadband services to consumers in urban, suburban, and rural areas. The rule changes will also improve opportunities for distance learning and telemedicine services by new or incumbent licensees," FCC said.

Commissioner Mike Copps (Democrat) said he had second thoughts about using spectrum earmarked for instructional purposes without an educational requirement. He also questioned allowing non-profit educators and private MMDS and MDS licensees to sell their spectrum.

"If we allow these licensees to sell their spectrum, we could see a rush of licensees who received their spectrum for free selling their licenses and pocketing the proceeds. If this occurs we will be vulnerable to charges of allowing windfall profits using the public spectrum. Wisely, this NPRM queries whether such an outcome is desirable."

He also pointed out that "...many in the educational community make excellent use of the band. The 1,275 current ITFS licensees serve millions of students on thousands of channels at more than 70,000 locations."

Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy also issued a separate statement saying she "...didn't know if this spectrum is best used to offer a third broadband pipe to the home, a mobile solution, a broadcast alternative or some other market-driven product, but I am willing to ask the question. Underutilized and unused spectrum has little value. ...The NPRM does not inhibit the ability of ITFS incumbents to offer their services as long as they wish."

The spectrum rights owned by the educators may be worth as much as \$100 billion. It would go a long way toward running the nation's school systems. On the other hand, the little used spectrum could be just taken back by the Government and reauctioned.

The Continuing Saga of K1MAN vs. the FCC

On March 4th, Vincent Kajunski, FCC District Director (Boston, MA) sent a letter to Glenn Baxter K1MAN (Belgrade Lakes, Maine) directing him to submit weekly logs of all transmissions from his station. Baxter responded to the FCC letter on March 8.

The letter, which referenced another letter sent to K1MAN dated January 29, 2002, stated that "Commission monitoring information and numerous complaints filed with the Commission indicate that the problems outlined in January 2002 have not been corrected...."

Background

Glenn Baxter, K1MAN founded the International Amateur Radio Network (IARN) nearly 20 years ago. In 1992 he began an Amateur Radio organization to compete with the American Radio Relay League (ARRL) called the American Amateur Radio Association (AARA).

Glenn got his FCC Novice class license in 1956 and his Extra and First Class Commercial tickets in 1964. He runs Collins Radio equipment on the ham bands. He is a degreed engineer and some of his equipment is home brew.

IARN started operation in 1985 during the Mexico City Earthquake. Two years later he began the daily IARN Amateur Information Bulletin Service on 80 and 20 meters. The service added a new talk show format in 1995 during which listeners may call in. Baxter's transmissions are made on 3.975 and 14.275 MHz as well as on AM on 3.890 MHz.

These programs are repeated many times each day, for a total of 15 hours of daily programming. It was apparently these long hours of on-air time that got the FCC's attention.

Many radioamateurs oppose K1MAN claiming that his use of ham frequencies is excessive, irrelevant and interferes with their signals. Baxter believes his scheduled transmissions are one-way information bulletins authorized under the rules which defines an information bulletin as "A message directed only to amateur operators consisting solely of subject matter of direct interest to the amateur service."

The ARRL also transmits daily voice, Morse code, and teleprinter bulletins on the HF bands according to a schedule. While the K1MAN bulletins are on two bands (80 and 20 meters), the ARRL bulletins are simultaneously transmitted on seven HF bands (160, 80, 40, 20, 17, 15 and 10 meters) as well on VHF (147.555 MHz.) Both services take up many hours daily of Amateur spectrum. There is no time limit during which amateur bulletins may be transmitted.

K1MAN activity May 14-15, 1999

In mid-May 1999, engineers from the FCC's Boston office unsuccessfully attempted to inspect Baxter's station while it was on the air. The FCC reported that the station

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was transmitting on 3975 kHz on both May 14 and 15, but the facilities appeared to be locked and no one was around ...either at Baxter's station at the tip of Long Point or at his nearby residence. There were no vehicles on the premises.

The FCC rules require that a control operator be present at the control point when a station is locally controlled.

On June 25, 1999, the FCC formally inquired into the circumstances surrounding the May visits. They wanted to know who the control operator was on those two occasions. In addition, the FCC asked for additional information concerning his operation going back several years including a list of the dates, times and frequencies that K1MAN transmitted without a control operator being present. Baxter responded on July 25, but failed to provide the information requested.

He said his three Collins transmitters were "controlled by two Radio Shack timers" but did not say if K1MAN had transmitted without a human control operator being present. An FCC letter dated August 4, 1999 detailed the inadequacies of his response. Shortly thereafter, K1MAN suspended his IARN bulletin service and filed a lawsuit against the FCC. It was dismissed by the U.S. District Court in Maine as well as a petition for reconsideration.

The January 29, 2002 FCC letter

In late 2001, K1MAN resumed his on-air IARN bulletin service and the FCC again went after him. A very lengthy January 2002 letter from the FCC restated the events of May 14 and 15 and "In view of [your station's] resumption and the resulting complaints we are receiving about deliberate interference, threats against those who do not relinquish frequencies for your use or who would complain, or who have complained, erratic operation, broadcasting, unauthorized tape recording and broadcast of telephone conversations, business use of an Amateur station and lack of station control, we have resumed our inquiry into the operation of K1MAN."

"In reviewing your letter dated August 24, 1999, referenced above, and your actions subsequent to coming back on Amateur frequencies, it appears that your understanding of certain Amateur Radio Service rules may be incorrect." The FCC made the following points:

Amateur Station Control – "...your control of the station by a "Radio Shack timer" while you are absent from your Amateur station is a violation of the Commission's Rules. You were not in control of your station on May 14 and 15, 1999 while you were in "both Belgrade Lakes and Augusta in either mobile or portable modes". Your statement in your response that 'K1MAN has never transmitted during the current license term without a control operator acting in full compliance with rules 97.105 and 97.109 as well as all other applicable FCC rules' is untrue."

"Simply put, to comply with Commission rules, you must be at the transmitter, or at the transmitter control point, every moment your station is transmitting, when your station is locally or remotely controlled."

Publishing a Transmitting Schedule & Interference – "It appears that you may be under the misconception that by publishing a transmitting schedule of K1MAN, you have certain rights under Commission rules regarding the control operator and frequency sharing requirements that you would not otherwise have."

"Simply put, to the extent that you start your transmissions on top of ongoing communications of other amateur service stations, you will be engaging in deliberate interference, in violation of Section 97.101 of the Commission's rules. No amateur service frequency is assigned for the exclusive use of any station. Your publishing an intended transmission schedule does not exempt you from that rule."

Threats to Complainants and Other Users – "Your sending "Felony Complaint Affidavits" to other Amateur Service licensees who complain or intend to complain of your operation, or who do not relinquish frequencies to you, was the subject of a Warning letter to you dated December 11, 2001. You have also been warned about such "Felony Complaint Affidavits" by the United States Attorney in Maine."

"The Commission will view any threats made by telephone, through the U.S. Mail or on radio frequencies to Amateur Radio licensees who file complaints with the Commission, or who do not relinquish frequencies for your use, as very serious."

Broadcasting – "We also note that on your web site and in your radio transmissions, you refer to your transmissions variously as "broadcasts, programs, talk shows, bulletins, pre-recorded interviews" and so forth. We have received complaints that you have broadcast comedy shows and commercial messages. We caution you that Section 97.113(b) of the Amateur service rules prohibits amateur station from engaging in any form of broadcasting. Certain one-way transmissions, such as information bulletins, are allowed as specified in the rules."

Tape Recording and Broadcasting Telephone Conversations – "We have received and have under review complaints that you have tape-recorded telephone conversations without the consent of the recorded party and that you have broadcast such tape recordings. We caution you that such recording without consent may be in violation of state or federal law."

"In summary, it is very important for you to understand that we will review all valid complaints concerning the operation of your Amateur station, and that Commission personnel will again inspect your station. The rules of the Amateur Service are straightforward and easy to understand. To the extent that you do not comply with Commission rules regarding the Amateur Radio Service, then to that extent enforcement action will be taken against your licenses. That enforcement action may include revocation of your station license, suspension of your operator license, a modification proceeding to restrict your operating privileges, or monetary forfeiture."

"It is also important for you to understand that if these matters are not resolved, your operator/primary station licenses will not be routinely renewed; but instead will be designated for hearing before an Administrative Law Judge. In such a proceeding, you would have the burden of proof to show that your licenses should be renewed."

March 4, 2003 letter from FCC

The March 4th letter from the FCC's Boston District Director Vincent Kajunski repeated some of the content for the January 29, 2002 letter.

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"Commission monitoring information and numerous complaints filed with the Commission indicate that the problems outlined in January 2002 have not been corrected. Your Amateur Radio station is apparently being used for broadcasting various 'programs', 'talk shows', children's shows and programs having nothing to do with Amateur Radio."

"Transmissions from your station are being used for deliberate interference and for communications in which you apparently have a pecuniary interest. Transmissions start and end erratically, are sometimes repetitive and abruptly end with no identification as required by Commission rules. Such operation indicates that the transmissions are not under the control of a licensed operator."

"Some of the transmissions from your station are tape recordings, and some are broadcasts of telephone conversations including recordings from an answering machine and in which there are no indications that you are complying with legal requirements regarding recording and broadcasting of telephone calls. Some of the transmissions are apparently broadcasts continuing for weeks of the same telephone calls and again contain no indication you are complying with the legal requirements regarding broadcasting or tape recording of telephone calls. We note also that you continually refer to so called 'felony affidavit complaints' that you claim 'have been filed with the Justice Department' against other licensees."

"Transmissions from your Amateur station include references to a degree program and directs listeners to your website that advertises an "American Radio School Technician Degree in Electronics" for "\$299.95". On that web site you also solicit donations for radio equipment, advertise a credit card, and solicit donations and advertise for "IARN" and "AARA". This is in apparent violation of Section 97.113(a)(3) of the Commission's rules, which prohibits 'Communications for hire or for material compensation, direct or indirect...' and 'Communications in which the station licensee or control operator has a pecuniary interest...'"

"Many of the transmissions from your Amateur station are broadcasts of threats against other licensees and slander of other Amateur licensees. Many transmissions solicit telephone calls from the general public."

"Finally, you will receive under separate cover a transcript of what appears to be a continuous 'CQ' loop transmitted by your station on February 3, 2003 for over two hours, apparently calling a so-called "20 Meter Classroom Net". The transmissions appear to have been made to deliberately interfere with other operators using the frequency and to block other operators from using the frequency."

The transmission made from his station on 14.272 MHz (USB) contained the following message repeated at about ten second intervals beginning at 8:30 a.m. EST. "This is the 20-Meter class room net calling CQ. The 20-Meter class room net is sponsored by AARA, the American Amateur Radio Association. Go to www.k1man.com for more details. Stations for the 20 Meter class room net call K1MAN."

"In view of the above, we need more information to determine whether you are operating your Amateur Radio station in compliance with Part 97 the Commission's rules and rules regarding recording and broadcasting of telephone calls."

"Section 97.103 of the rules provides that 'When deemed necessary by an EIC (now District Director) to assure compliance with FCC Rules, the station licensee must maintain a record of station operations containing such items of information as the EIC may require....'

K1MAN was directed to furnish the following information

within 30 days: (paraphrased below)

a. Information on the continuous "CQ" loop of February 3 including dates, length of time, and frequencies and a description of replies received.

b. A list of the dates, length of time, and frequencies during which your Amateur station has operated, since February 15, 2002, without you at the transmitter location;

c. For such incidents listed in "b" above, state the name and address of the control operator, where the control point and operator were located....;

K1MAN is also to provide the following information to the FCC on a weekly basis beginning March 17, 2003:

d. The name, address, telephone number, and exact location of the control operator and the method of station control used...;

e. Dates, times and frequencies of broadcasts of telephone conversations, either live or recorded, including any recordings from answering machines;

f. Dates, times and frequencies of transmissions referencing the offer of a degree in electronics or an IARN credit card;

g. Dates, times and frequencies referencing the 'IARN' web site;

h. Dates, times and frequencies of transmissions by your Amateur station soliciting donations of radio equipment or other items;

i. Dates, times and frequencies of transmissions over your Amateur station soliciting donations to 'Radio Peace Corps Foundation';

j. Dates and times of transmissions claiming that you, IARN or AARA are affiliated with 'People First Network' in the Solomon Islands;

k. Dates, times and frequencies of 'CQs', including recorded or automated 'CQs', and a description of responses you received to those messages..."

"This information is needed in order to determine what, if any, action to take in this matter. You are reminded that Congress has made punishable a willfully false or misleading reply to a letter of this type."

"The letter was signed by Vincent F. Kajunski, District Director, FCC Boston"

Baxter's response

On March 8th K1MAN responded to the FCC. It included "...a formal *Freedom of Information Act Request* for all information, monitoring, and communications of any kind, both internal and external, regarding K1MAN and including but not limited to: all notes, all complaints, all letters, all E-mails, all information, notes and any transcripts or tapes of all telephone calls, all internal memos, and all other information whatsoever regarding K1MAN."

Baxter also asked about the three FCC *Notices of Apparent Liability* that had been issued to K1MAN and the numerous 'Felony Complaint Affidavits' that he has issued concerning 'criminal interference' to his transmissions.

Baxter said the information contained in the FCC letter of March 4, 2003 was "totally inaccurate" adding that:

- Amateur Radio Station K1MAN has always been

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operated in total and full compliance with all FCC rules, federal laws, state laws, and all other applicable laws as well as legal and civil requirements.

- There has always been a control operator at the control point.
- To date, there has been no requirement for K1MAN to keep a log, and therefore, a response to a, b, and c of your letter cannot be made with legal accuracy....
- All transmissions have been of direct interest to the Amateur radio Service.
- No transmissions have ever been made to the general public.
- No transmissions have ever been made to cause deliberate interference to other radio signals or to prevent others from using a frequency.
- All FCC rules, state laws, federal laws, and other legal and civil requirements have always been fully and completely complied with.
- Regarding your references to my felony complaint affidavits regarding criminal interference to K1MAN transmissions... the right to freedom of speech and freedom of the press guarantees my rights to publish to anyone and everyone I desire anything I want....
- I remind you that slander is defined in Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary as "A false report, maliciously uttered, and tending to injure the reputation of another." No slander has ever been transmitted over station K1MAN. Any alleged "slander" transmitted over K1MAN would be subject to civil litigation, of course, and is not in the jurisdiction of the Commission.
- No references of a pecuniary interest have ever been transmitted over K1MAN or directed to the www.K1MAN.com web site. You are reminded that FCC rules allow ordering of pizza via amateur radio as well as 'talk ins' to a ham fest where admission is charged, other than amateur radio equipment is sold, and yet not considered to be a pecuniary interest under FCC rules since such are considered to be 'incidental' effects of routine amateur radio communications.
- No donation requests of a pecuniary interest have ever been transmitted over K1MAN.

K1MAN Editorial entitled "FCC CORRUPTION CONTINUES"

Baxter said in a March 16th "editorial" posted to his website that his "...first weekly report will be mailed on Monday, 17 March 2003, along with three NEW notarized felony complaint affidavits against the three stooges of amateur radio, ND8V, K3VR, and K1KW. These three hams have been reportedly and illegally encouraged by Riley Hollingsworth, K4ZDH, of the FCC, to intentionally interfere with K1MAN transmissions."

Baxter also said he would also be sending copies of his "felony complaint affidavits" to the FCC in Boston from now on with the originals going to the U.S. Department of Justice in Washington, D.C.

FCC amends rules concerning "Truthful Statements to the Commission"

On March 10th, the FCC released new Section § 1.17 wording which specifies the requirements for the submission of statements to the Commission. The FCC said it believed. "The new rule will also enhance the effectiveness of our enforcement efforts."

The new rule broadens the category of persons subject to the rule by applying the requirement to:

- (1) any holder of any Commission authorization, whether by application or by blanket authorization or other rule;
- (2) any person performing without Commission authorization an activity that requires Commission authorization;
- (3) any person that has received a citation or a letter of inquiry from the Commission or its staff, or is otherwise the subject of a Commission or staff investigation,

The former rule, which applied only to applicants and radio licensees/permittees making written statements, was less precise in defining the standard of care required.

The new rule prohibits both written and oral statements of fact that are intentionally incorrect, misleading or beyond belief. The new rule specifically provides:

§ 1.17 Truthful and accurate statements to the Commission

(a) In any investigatory or adjudicatory matter within the Commission's jurisdiction, no person subject to this rule shall:

(1) in any written or oral statement of fact, intentionally provide material factual information that is incorrect or intentionally omit material information that is necessary to prevent any material factual statement that is made from being incorrect or misleading; and

(2) in any written statement of fact, provide material factual information that is incorrect or omit material information that is necessary to prevent any material factual statement that is made from being incorrect or misleading without a reasonable basis for believing that any such material factual statement is correct and not misleading.

(b) For purpose of paragraph (a), "persons subject to this rule" shall mean the following:

(1) any applicant for any Commission authorization;

(2) any holder of any Commission authorization, whether by application or by blanket authorization or other rule;

(3) any person performing without Commission authorization an activity that requires Commission authorization;

(4) any person that has received a citation or a letter of inquiry from the Commission or its staff, or is otherwise the subject of a Commission or staff investigation, including an informal investigation.

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Cutting Edge Technology

For people on the go, the future is wireless! The Cellular Telecommunications & Internet Association's Wireless 2003 Show closed on March 19th in New Orleans. CTIA is the international association for the wireless telecommunications industry, representing carriers, manufacturers and wireless Internet providers. One of the keynote speakers was FCC Chairman Mike Powell.

- Twenty years ago there were no mobile phones, now one-third of all calls either originate or terminate on a wireless phone. "Wireless billable MOU" (minutes of use) increased more than 35 percent in 2002 to 619 billion – up from 456 billion for 2001. At the end of 2002, the wireless industry had more than 140 million subscribers. About 5 percent of U.S. households have gone totally wireless and eliminated traditional landlines.

- Handset manufacturers such as Siemens AG, Nokia Corp., Sony-Ericsson, Motorola Inc. and Samsung Corp. exhibited their flashiest cellphone handsets that included all sorts of customizable bells and whistles. Many contained cameras.

Sanyo showed a camera phone that lets users add a 10 second voice message to any picture. A new Nokia cell phone lets users film video clips and download photo editing software.

Wireless text and multi-media messaging is a big growth area. One company booth featured the "World's Smallest Film Festival" ...mini-movies piped to tiny cell phone screens. Sprint PCS cell phones – doubling as computers – use Microsoft's Pocket PC operating system software.

- South Korea's LG Electronics Inc. showed their new "Home Networking" technology which allows users to remotely operate household appliances using their mobile phones.

- Wi-Fi "802.11b" wireless "hot-spot" networking technology was featured everywhere with many companies getting into it. For example, IBM Corp. will add Wi-Fi access to 1,000 truck stops. Linking Wi-Fi "hotspots" with each other (roaming) and its attendant problems (such as billing) are being worked on but are yet to be resolved. And Wi-Fi mobile phones that work at "hotspots" are

rumored to be on the way.

- Motorola showcased their "Viamoto" location software that turns data capable cell phones and PDAs into navigation systems and local information guides. Once a user selects a destination, the handset calculates the best route and navigates the user to the destination. GPS-enabled handsets and digital map technology provide travelers with a real-time, voice-activated, turn-by-turn directions or a "maneuver icon" points to the right direction.

Emerging Communications

On trial airline flights across the Atlantic, people are on the Internet using "Connexion," Boeing's high-speed service. Intel is working with companies like Boeing so that the new Intel Centrino mobile technology is compatible with public Internet access zones inside planes, airports, café's, restaurants, bookstores and at parks. The new Centrino technology is designed for people who want their laptops to have long battery life and easy, unwired access to the Internet. This year, more than half of all mobile PCs in the world will come with wireless connectivity.

Watch baseball on your computer! Major League Baseball will show 1,000 live games on the Internet this season, the first time it has offered a full season of video Webcasts. Due to blackout rules, fans will be able to watch games that don't involve their local team at MLB.com, baseball's official Web site. Spring training contests were available at no cost, but the regular season costs \$14.95 a month or \$79.95 for the season. RealNetworks Inc. provides the Webcast technology and streaming services. More info on the Major League Baseball website at: <www.mlb.com>

Big Mac, Coke, fries and high-speed wireless Internet access. McDonald's restaurants in New York City are testing Wi-Fi Internet service. Ten stores are offering an hour of Web access with purchase of a combination meal. Additional access hours cost \$3. The three month trial service will be expanded to 300 stores. The company has partnered with chip maker Intel Corp. to co-market the service.

Computers & Software

Bargains on over-stock, returned or refurbished electronic items can be had at <www.ReturnBuy.com>. They offer computers, PDAs, digital cameras, audio/video products, phones ...and more.

This company primarily sells its goods on eBay. Headquartered in Virginia, ReturnBuy has a huge (quarter-of-a-million square foot) warehouse in Columbia, SC.

They are now branching out to sell goods direct through their website. Basically, ReturnBuy sells returns, but they also offer brand-new and refurbished items.. If someone returns an item to one of their clients for any reason (wrong color, wrong model, just didn't want it), ReturnBuy will sell it at a deep discount.

Dell Computer sells their own refurbished returns or cancellations in their Outlet Center. To get there, go to: <www.dell.com> and enter the words "Dell Outlet" into their search box. "Guaranteed same-as-new" with same support and warranty. The only real difference is that you have to accept their configuration rather than your own.

Gadgets & Gizmos

German company invents talking washing machine. "Hermine," a voice-activated washer, can even handle complex verbal instructions like "Pre-wash, then a hot wash at 95 degrees, spin at 1400 rotations, and start in half an hour." The washer also talks back and tells users how to tackle tough stain problems, how to sort clothes, even how to load a washer. It was shown for the first time at Germany's Hanover Fair on March 12. Source: Ananova

Internet & World Wide Web

States are not losing nearly the amount of tax revenue from online sales that they claim, the Direct Marketing Association (DMA) said in a report entitled "A Current Calculation of Uncollected State Sales Tax Arising

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from Internet Growth." There is "...no pot of gold for the states in creating new burdens for remote retailers."

The DMA report varied widely with a study by two University of Tennessee professors. The DMA says U.S. states lost \$1.9 billion in 2001 in uncollected Internet sales, while the University of Tennessee pegged the loss at \$13.3 ...seven times higher. U.S. states lost \$2.8 billion last year in uncollected Internet sales taxes, DMA said.

"The Internet is not creating a massive leak in state coffers. Consequently, Congress should not require online sellers to collect sales taxes."

A 1992 Supreme Court decision prohibits states from collecting taxes on out-of-state retailers unless they have a physical presence in the state.

The University of Tennessee study used sales estimates compiled by Forrester Research at the height of the Internet boom while the DMA used actual sales figures compiled by the Commerce Department which showed that online sales grew 28 percent last year ...much faster than the 1.6 percent growth rate reported for all retail sales.

Thanks to the Internet, hotel room rates are plunging everywhere. That's because nationwide, 30 percent of all hotel rooms go unsold every night and hotel operators are looking to the Internet to fill them.

The newest entrant into discounted hotel rooms is Orbitz, the airline-owned travel Web site. Orbitz will target the top 25 travel destinations in the U.S. and will sell hotel rooms at rates as low as 75% off retail prices.

They join big players, TravelWeb, Expedia and Hotels.com, which account for most of the online hotel bookings. Together they sold 20 million room nights last year. TravelWeb.com is a partnership of Marriott, Hilton and Hyatt Corp. Both Expedia and Hotels.com are majority-owned by Barry Diller's USA Interactive. And Travelocity has launched its own wholesale hotel offering.

According to Forrester Research Inc., a market research firm in Cambridge, Mass., online sales of leisure hotel rooms more than doubled to \$2.7 billion last year, compared with 41% growth, to \$9.1 billion, of online airline-ticket sales in the same period. Interestingly, less than 10 percent of hotel sales are booked online.

In related news, Expedia reached an agreement with Six Continents, the world's No. 2 hotel operator and owner of the Holiday Inn, InterContinental and Crowne Plaza brands. Expedia will purchase the rooms wholesale, then mark up the rooms for resale. Six Continents has more than 3,300 hotels and 515,000 rooms.

Two large hotel operators in Las Vegas -- Mandalay Resort Group and Park Place Entertainment Corp. -- joined up to create LasVegas.com which will compete with Hotels.com and Expedia. The Web site sells rooms in all Las Vegas hotels, not just those of Mandalay and Park Place.

The bottom line to all of this, is do not call a hotel to book a room. See what is available at Expedia, Hotels.com, Travelweb.com, and Travelocity.com.

And after you find the lowest price, you might even submit a still lower price at Priceline.com and see what you get. The problem with Priceline.com is that you can only select the city's zone and hotel's "star rating." Another hotel option is Lowestfare.com which is owned by Priceline. But unlike Priceline, Lowestfare.com lets consumers see hotel brand names and exact locations.

Electronics in the News

Glendale, California police have swooped down on two brothers and charged them with manufacturing and marketing illegal cable TV descramblers for nearly a decade.

Seized were 3,300 illegal cable descrambling boxes and \$250,000 in cash. Arthur Karanfilian, 18, and Vardkis Karanfilian, 26, sold the boxes on eBay for about \$80 each and from their own website.

The practice is apparently widespread! A recent search of eBay shows that there are still over 200 vendors selling illegal cable descramblers. And a Google search on "cable descrambler" yielded more than 50 thousand "hits!"

The suspects bought the boxes and then installed special computer chips that scramble cable signals, giving buyers cable access for free. Records show they could have sold as many as 100,000 boxes.

Glendale police also seized a computerized customer list with thousands of

names. The U.S. Secret Service is considering going after the customers on the list; the penalty is up to a \$5,000 fine.

Washington Whispers

Relatives back home may find that e-mail from military personnel in the Persian Gulf may be cut back or in some cases eliminated during the Iraqi war. E-mail is a marked improvement over the postal service and MARS radio-based telephone calls handled by ham operators. But it carries a risk. The Pentagon is concerned that sensitive information -- such as troop movements -- might leak out in real time.

Previously, e-mail and digital photos were not monitored by the military providing an opportunity for what some fear might be an inadvertent leak. Service men and women are told what information should not be included in their e-mail messages, including their location and current or future operations.

The Defense Department has their own secure wide-area network (called SIPRNET, or Secret Internet Protocol Router Network) that is not connected to the Internet for communicating sensitive operational information.

Thousands of Americans die each year due to a range of medical mistakes made by health care professionals. On March 13th, the FDA proposed a new regulation that would require "bar codes" on all prescription, some over-the-counter drugs, vaccines and blood to reduce medical errors.

The new system would work like this: The hospital gives the patient a bar-coded identification bracelet to link the patient to their Electronic Medical Record (EMR.) Before a healthcare worker administers a drug, the patient's bar code is scanned to pull up the patient's EMR.

The healthcare worker then scans the drugs that the hospital pharmacy has provided to be administered to the patient. This scan informs the computer which drug is being administered.

The computer then compares the patient's medical record to the drugs being administered to ensure that they match what is prescribed for the patient. Public comments on the new rule close June 13. More info at: <www seniors gov>

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The first step in reducing medication errors is the CPOE (Computerized Physician Order Entry) ...drug information entered by the doctor into a computerized database. The system also taps into a knowledge database of interactions, dosages, methods of administration and a list of the individual's past medications.

President Bush signed the National Do-Not-Call Registry into law on March 11th to help consumers block unwanted telemarketing calls. The registry will be overseen by the Federal Trade Commission and funded by fees collected from the telemarketing industry.

Telemarketers can be fined up to \$11,000 for calling someone on the list. Politicians, surveys and charities are exempt from using the list. The FCC oversees certain industries (such as phone companies) and will have to "buy in" to the registry for it to affect them.

The FTC awarded a \$3.5 million contract to Vienna, Va.-based AT&T Government Solutions to build and operate the do-not-call list. The FTC will start taking names online in July and the list should be operational by fall. People will also be able to sign up by phone, but that system will be phased in over eight weeks.

The telemarketing industry contends the bill violates free speech and says they will sue in court.

Amateur Radio

FCC Amateur Radio Enforcement

Anthony M. Satorino, Jr., N2QPY (Patchogue, NY) has been cited by the FCC for deliberately interfering with other licensees on the Two-Meter ham band and engaging in unlicensed operation on Ten-Meters... He also was directed to update the FCC records to reflect his correct mailing address.

Sheri A. Gilbert, K5YHA and William E. Gilbert K5EK (Lupton, MI) were notified in late February that their K5YHA/K5EK repeater operating on 146.700 MHz is the subject of "numerous rule violations" and harmful interference to the K8GER repeater.

"Violations on the repeater have consisted of failure to identify by users, use of false or misleading call signs by users, and

failure to have a control operator for the repeater. In January you apparently turned the operation of the repeater over to a car rally and violations such as those above occurred for over 12 hours over a two day period."

The Gilberts were directed to supply the FCC with certain information including any action taken to resolve the interference ...and to ensure that users of the repeater properly identify. The FCC also asked for more information concerning the use of the repeater during the January car rally.

The FCC's Detroit District Regional Director removed their repeater automatic control privileges until the matter is resolved. The repeater has since been shut down by the Gilberts'.

Glen B. Roberts, KF6YRY (Tujunga, CA) has been accused of "...deliberately interfering with the N6SAP repeater system on 147.435 MHz. The interference has included music and other unidentified transmissions from your mobile unit." In addition, Roberts' has been asked by the N6SAP repeater licensee not to use the repeater system. The FCC "...expects that request to be honored."

Herbert M. Ferris, W0TPZ (Austin, MN) and Edward Nicolaisen, KG4MXB (New Port Richey, FL) have been asked to contact the FCC relative to complaints about the operation of their stations. The FCC did not go into further detail about the complaints.

Jeffrey J. Shaffer, N9OJG (Milwaukee, WI) was contacted by the FCC concerning monitoring information indicating that at various times last summer and fall, "...you interfered with the K9IZV repeater system operating on 146.310/146.910 MHz." Continued such incidents "...will subject you to revocation and suspension proceedings, as well as a fine." Fines normally range from \$7,500 to \$10,000.," FCC said.

The Cadet Amateur Radio Seminar repeater, W2KGY (West Point, NY) is causing interference to coordinated repeater, NA1RA, operating on 146.730 MHz in New Milford, CT. They were directed to inform the FCC within 30 days of the action they are taking to minimize or eliminate interference to the Northville Amateur Radio Association Repeater NA1RA, James DeLancey,

KE1AI, trustee.

William T. Shipley, N4WS (Cookeville, TN) and Timothy L. Wilcox, KF6FM (Riverside, CA) were the subject of an FCC inquiry into Club Call Signs licensed in their name as trustee. They both submitted satisfactory information and the matter has been closed without further FCC action.

Mark S. Deason, KD5RBD (Ben Wheeler, TX) was warned about operating radio-transmitting equipment on the 40 Meter band. "Under your Technician Class Amateur license, you are not authorized to use those frequencies."

Gerald Hogue, KD5CYA (Conway, AR), David Stone, KE5CPA (Morrilton, AR) and Tom Lee, AC5RU (Jerusalem, AR) are embroiled in an repeater coordination dispute. Tom Lee's repeater AC5RU is causing harmful interference to coordinated repeater KD5CYA, licensed to Gerald Hogue.

The allegation is that Lee's repeater is uncoordinated because the coordination had been forfeited by numerous changes in location. Lee maintains that he had verbal authority from the coordinator to move the repeater. A change of membership at the Arkansas Repeater Council (the coordinator), however, resulted in the coordination being revoked. Several explanatory letters have been exchanged between those involved and the FCC.

The FCC said that "After reviewing the submissions and all relevant information, we decline to intervene in this dispute. It is our position that in this case both parties are responsible for solving the interference and we urge them to do so in the best interests of Amateur Radio [since] it is not clear which repeater is the coordinated repeater."

David L. Price, WA6FUL (Redwood City, CA) had his authority to operate his repeaters under automatic control revoked by the FCC's San Francisco District Director. His station is under enforcement review for apparently transmitting false call signs on 441.100 MHz, and not using any call sign when operating a repeater on 52.64 MHz. "Information also indicates that you are aware of the false identification and the failure to identify but have declined to correct either problem."

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Amateur Radio Station Call Signs

...sequentially issued as of the first of April 1, 2003:

District	Extra	Advanced	Tech./General/Novice
0	AB0XX	KI0SM	→ KC0PLW
1	AB1CH	KE1ME	→ KB1JQS
2	AB2QK	KG2RR	→ KC2LBR
3	AB3AM	KF3EH	→ KB3JDIM
4	AG4YI	KV4GY	→ KG4ZEL
5	AD5NS	KM5XY	→ KD5VUQ
6	AE6LR	KR6FE	→ KG6PVI
7	AC7XZ	KK7XO	→ KD7VBV
8	AB8QS	KI8KE	→ KC8WCU
9	AB9HG	KG9QV	→ KC9DLL
Hawaii	→ AH6RQ	NH7QA	WH6DGX
Alaska	→ AL7RS	KL1LP	WL7CVR
Virgin Isl.	→ KP2CT	NP2MN	WP2AIS
Puerto Rico	→ KP3BN	WP3WI	WP4NPB

[Source: FCC Amateur Service Database, Washington, DC]

- Two ham clubs have had their applications for a Low Power FM (LPFM broadcast) station denied and dismissed by the FCC. It seems that the LPFM stations would be located too close to existing FM broadcast stations.

The Hendricks County Amateur Radio Community, (Danville, IN) had requested 98.9 MHz (LPFM Channel No. 255) and the Tulsa Amateur Radio Club, Inc., (Tulsa, OK) had applied for 103.9 MHz (LPFM Channel No. 280.)

Low Power FM is a broadcast service that permits the licensing of 50- to-100-watt FM radio stations within a service radius of up to 3.5 miles and 1- to-10-watt FM radio stations within a service radius of 1 to 2 miles. These stations are authorized for noncommercial educational broadcasting only.

Congress passed legislation in December 2000 mandating third-adjacent channel protection standards for LPFM. This protection is accomplished through the use of minimum distance separation.

- The Society of Wireless Pioneers, Inc., (SOWP) is an organization of ex-professional telegraphy operators. Their membership has been shrinking due to age and attrition ...and because Morse has been falling by the wayside for many years now. The group has now proposed a constitutional amendment whereby after March 31, 2003, SOWP will accept as professional members:
 - Amateur Extra Class applicants who hold an FCC 2nd Class Radiotelegraph license and also have held an Extra Class license for at least 10 years.
 - Applicants who have held an Advanced Class license for at least 15 years.
 - Applicants who have held a General Class license

for at least 20 years.

- The ARRL held an Executive Committee meeting on March 15 in Irving, Texas. It was announced that the FCC will release an "omnibus" Amateur Radio Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) sometime in May. The purpose of the omnibus NPRM is to address several Amateur Radio proposals and petitions before the Commission. The EC did not adopt any positions as ARRL policy, since it's not yet clear which proposals will be included.
- The EC also approved 10 new schools for the ARRL Amateur Radio Education and Technology Program, popularly known as "The Big Project." Fifty schools now participate in the program which was first launched two years ago. It employs ham radio to enhance student learning through the application of mathematical and scientific concepts. In addition to a complete curriculum, the program resources include a classroom bookshelf of ARRL technical manuals, an on-line sourcebook, an interactive Web site and a complete Amateur Radio station. A new round of Big Project application approvals and funding will get under way in November.
- ARRL has sent out fund raising letter to its membership asking for donations "...to open the world of Amateur Radio to a new generation!" The funds will be used to support the League's "2003 Education and Technology Program" in elementary schools. Last year's campaign raised more than \$250,000. Contributions are tax-deductible.
- The Amateur Radio Spectrum Protection Act of 2003 now has been reintroduced in both chambers of Congress. HR 713 and S 537 are aimed at ensuring the availability of spectrum to Amateur Radio operators.
- Amateur radio operators in Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea stayed on the air for 24 hours during their annual 2003 John Moyle Field Day Contest from Saturday, March 15 to Sunday, March 16. The rules are very similar to those of the ARRL Field Day. Score sheets are sent to the Wireless Institute of Australia.

Analog to digital television transition going strong

"We're making progress, and we're now in the home stretch." [CEA]

The Consumer Electronics Association held its eighth annual HDTV Summit on March 10th in Washington, DC. The one-day conference hosted by the CEA featured such industry heavyweights as Eddie Fritts, president and CEO, National Association of Broadcasting; Robert Sachs, president and CEO, National Cable and Telecommunications Association; Gary Shapiro, president and CEO, CEA and Jack Valenti, president and CEO, Motion Picture Association of America.

CEA president Gary Shapiro said that 2003 will be a critical year for high definition television and that the

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launch of ESPN's high-definition channel on March 30 will be the catalyst that moves HDTV to a mass market success.

He said that over the last four years, "More than \$10 billion has been invested by consumers in digital television during which nearly 5 million digital television products have been sold." Most DTV products sold, however, do not include the needed HDTV tuner.

Shapiro said that the average price for a DTV product has fallen almost 50 percent. In 1998 the average DTV price was \$3,147. Last year it dropped to \$1,693. CEA expects the average DTV set to sell for \$1,134 in 2006. More than 98 percent of all U.S. households can now receive at least one DTV station.

CEA said more than 2.7 million DTV television sets and monitors were sold last year, up from 1.5 million in 2001. In 2003, almost 4 million units will be sold and most will be high-definition television.

Of the DTVs sold, 85 percent are HDTV capable. Sales of widescreen DTVs also escalated in 2002, with 60 percent of DTV models having 16:9 aspect ratios, up from 50 percent for all DTVs sold over the last four years.

Models that are either connected to a DTV tuner or have a DTV tuner built in represented 11 percent of DTV sales in 2002, and 14 percent of all DTVs sold since the launch. Many people who have bought DTVs have held off on the tuner purchase because they are waiting for more high definition content.

Surprisingly, DTVs with 5.1-channel decoders built in for 6-channel surround sound continue to represent only 3 percent of all DTV's sold.

Jack Valenti, Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) president, said movies could not be made if people are allowed to freely download them from the Internet. The MPAA (movie industry) intends to protect its content by prohibiting peer-to-peer file sharing. The average cost of producing a movie in 2002 was \$90 million. Valenti said he would support a consumers fair-use right to record an HDTV movie on a PVR or to redistribute it throughout a home.

Edward Fritts, National Association of Broadcasters president, chided cable operators for only carrying 75 of the current 779 DTV broadcast stations on the air.

The National Cable & Telecommunications Association reminded Fritts that cable operators are under no obligation to carry both analog and digital signals. All cable operators will carry all DTV broadcast stations once analog signals are shut off in 2006. NCTA said that most cable operators look to local HDTV services as a weapon to fend off satellite competitors who are not carrying local channels in high definition.

House Energy and Commerce Committee chairman Billy Tauzin (R-La.) expects to begin hearings on a new DTV bill after the Easter recess. Among other things, the bill will address ways to speed the government's reclamation of analog spectrum.

What you can do about e-mail SPAM

Roughly 40 percent of all e-mail traffic in the United States is spam, up from 8 percent in late 2001 and nearly doubling in the past six months, according to Brightmail, Inc., a major vendor of anti-spam software.

By the end of this year, industry experts predict, fully half of all e-mail will be unsolicited ... much is pornographic, comes from scam artists or contains viruses. About 40 percent of U.S. Postal Service mail is business marketing.

Only one state, Delaware, bans unsolicited commercial bulk e-mail. But the state has yet to have a successful prosecution because it is so difficult to track spammers down.

Experts say that despite the rise in the volume of spam, there are many things you can do to better keep it under control.

- **Don't click the "unsubscribe" link.** In a perfect world, you should be able to automatically get taken off an e-mail list by unsubscribing in this way. But spammers have co-opted the system and use the unsubscribe link to confirm you have an active e-mail account. They then sell your name to other spammers. Better to just delete the e-mail.
- **Use a long e-mail name.** The longer your e-mail handle, with letters and numbers included, the lower the chance that a computer-generated e-mail name will match yours. Spammers use software to generate thousands of e-mail names in the hopes that they will match existing accounts.
- **Have multiple accounts.** By using separate accounts for e-commerce and personal use, you decrease the chances that your personal address will get spammed.
- **Avoid chat rooms and Web-based discussion groups.** Spammers are constantly harvesting the Internet for new addresses. They do so by using software to search Web pages for names. Online chat rooms and news groups are easy targets.
- **Limit how often your e-mail address appears on any Web page.** This may be difficult, or undesirable, for many businesspeople.
- **Avoid online contests and surveys.** These are another prime vehicle for spammers to gather e-mail names.
- **Check out new filtering software.** Technology is evolving, and many creative solutions are being introduced by Internet providers and other firms.
- **Sign your e-mail with a "human readable" signature.** Instead of "yourname@domain.com," write it "yourname at domain dot com". This makes it harder for software "harvesters" to scoop-up your address.

[Excerpted partly from the Washington Post]